



MEETING THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT CHALLENGE

2004

Biography

William F. Townsend

Deputy Director - NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Mr. Townsend is the Deputy Director of NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD. As such, he shares with the Director the responsibility for the executive leadership and overall direction and management of the Center and its assigned programs and activities. Additionally, he serves as the principal operating official with general management responsibility for Center programmatic activities and management of resources. Goddard's overall mission includes major roles in three areas of responsibility: Earth Science, Space Science, and Technology.

Prior to his assignment to Goddard in March 1998, Mr. Townsend had served since August 1993 as the Deputy Associate Administrator (Programs) for the Office of Earth Science where he was responsible for the general management and direction of all Earth Science flight programs. For a 20-month period, beginning in June 1996, Mr. Townsend served as the acting Associate Administrator for the Enterprise.

Prior key positions within NASA included Deputy Director of the Earth Science Applications Division and Chief of the Flight Programs Branch. His first assignment at NASA Headquarters was to lead the development of TOPEX/POSEIDON, a cooperative program with France, whose purpose was to fully exploit the potential of altimetry for oceanography. During his tenure at Wallops, which began in 1963, Mr. Townsend was Experiment Manager for the Seasat Radar Altimeter Experiment, which flew in 1978 and provided the first high precision altimeter data taken over the oceans from space.

Mr. Townsend was born in Nassawadox, VA in 1946. He received an electrical engineering degree with honors from Virginia Polytechnic Institute in Blacksburg, VA in 1970. He has received numerous awards including Goddard's Robert C. Baumann Memorial Award for Mission Success in 2003. He also received the NASA Distinguished Service Medal in 1995 for his leadership and technical guidance of the Earth Science Program. In 1994 and 2003, he received the Presidential Rank Award of Meritorious Executive. He also received the NASA Medal for Outstanding Leadership in 1993, and in 1994, the French Space Agency's Bronze Medal, both for his work on the highly successful TOPEX/POSEIDON Program. In 1976, he received the NASA Exceptional Service Medal for his pioneering work in radar altimetry.

He and his wife, Carolyn, reside in Annapolis, MD. They have two children, Jason, a student at the University of Colorado in Boulder, and Tiffany, a student at Annapolis High School. His other interests include sailing, snow skiing, and old house restoration.



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